

MARINE MAMMAL STRANDINGS PROGRAM

The DMR Stranding Program & Protected Species Programs are dedicated to the response and rescue of stranded or entangled marine mammals and sea turtles. In order to assist NOAA with the Marine Mammal Protection Act, enacted in 1972, the DMR Stranding Program entered into agreement in 2005. This program is part of the Protected Resources Division of DMR and is responsible for the protection, health, welfare, data collection, monitoring, and management of marine mammal strandings and the prevention of large whale entanglement and injury. Currently staff and volunteers respond to any live or dead stranded seals, whales, dolphins, porpoises, and sea turtles from Kittery to Rockland. The Disentanglement Network responds to minke whale and sea turtle entanglements, while providing and establishing joint stand-by assistance in fin or right whale entanglements. There are a number of ways to be involved with these programs including field response, office work, educational outreach, and internships. Trainings are conducted on both an annual and as needed basis and include species identification and behavioral workshops. Volunteers are given access to appropriate gear and support in whatever capacity they are trained and are chosen based on location, experience, and skills.

For these programs:



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Strandings Coordinator
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Contact: Erin Summers
Whale Plan Scientist
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WATER QUALITY MONITORING



DMR protects public health by monitoring coastal water quality and surveying the shoreline for pollution sources in all shellfish harvesting areas. Currently, volunteers assist by collecting almost 50 percent of the water samples for analysis at our labs in Lamoine and Boothbay Harbor. Water quality data is needed to regulate shellfish growing areas to ensure that only pollution-free areas are open to harvesting. In most cases, water samples are collected monthly from April through October. Volunteers work independently after receiving training and equipment needed to collect samples.



PHYTOPLANKTON MONITORING



DMR and the Maine State Planning Office are supporting community-based volunteer groups that monitor toxic phytoplankton species along the coast. Volunteers collect water samples in the spring, summer, & fall using field microscopes to identify the phytoplankton species. This volunteer program compliments the toxic shellfish program carried out by DMR, which closes shellfish flats to harvesting when toxins are found present in a species and are found at potentially harmful levels. Volunteers receive training, on-going support, and the necessary equipment to carry out the duties of this program.

For these programs:

Contact: Alison Sirois
Volunteer Coordinator
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HORSESHOE CRAB MONITORING



Horseshoe crabs on the Atlantic coast represent a \$70 million commercial industry. Resource depletion and resulting regulations have shifted harvest pressure to northern states like Maine. The DMR monitoring program will survey known spawning sites to determine status of the horseshoe crab populations in Maine. Volunteers will work with scientists to coordinate site surveys and collect data on spawning behavior, habitat and environmental conditions like water temperatures, salinity, and dissolved oxygen levels. These surveys will be conducted at a minimum of 5 sites from Brunswick to Taunton Bay during spawning season May through June. Training will be provided.

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RIVER FISHERIES RESTORATION & ADOPT-A-FISHWAY

There are many opportunities to assist in the restoration of migratory fish species in the Androscoggin and Kennebec Rivers. Activities include transporting & releasing spawning fish to upstream habitats; monitoring & collecting data on fish passage at dam sites; sampling juvenile fish species & abundance; assessing fish communities; tagging and tracking sturgeon; assisting at the Waldoboro Shad Hatchery; assisting in statewide smelt stream surveys; participating in habitat assessment; and fishway monitoring and maintenance. Volunteers work April through December with most field work conducted May through October. Training and gear is supplied for interested participants. Groups are encouraged.

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Marine Resource Scientist
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THE MAINE STATE AQUARIUM

DMR's Education Division operates and maintains a seasonal (May through September) aquarium facility. Volunteers are needed to help educate visitors about our touch tank species, which includes a variety of invertebrates, sharks, skates, and fish and assist during seasonal set-up and breakdown. Volunteers have the opportunity to help behind-the-scenes with animals care and feeding, collect specimens, and participate in programs & special events. Volunteers receive training and are given appropriate wear for shifts, which are usually between two and four hours. A Junior Docent program for 14-18 yrs is also offered. Applications available and groups encouraged.

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Natural Science Educator

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BURNT ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE

DMR's Education Division owns and operates the Burnt Island Lighthouse Station, located at the entrance to Boothbay Harbor. This 5-acre island and historic site was transferred to DMR from the Coast Guard as part of the Maine Lights Program. It now serves as an educational and outreach facility for school groups and the public through overnight and living history programs. Volunteers are needed to assist with facility and grounds maintenance, serve as "Living Lighthouse" family members & keepers, gift shop attendants, and special events. Training is given to relevant volunteers. Groups encouraged.

Contact: Elaine Jones

Education Director

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The mission of the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) is to conserve and develop Maine's marine resources; to conduct scientific research on these resources; to promote the sustainable use of Maine's valuable commercial and recreational fisheries and other marine resources; to work with local, state, and federal officials to manage activities in coastal waters; and to enforce the laws and regulations necessary to accomplish these goals - all while encouraging an ethic of personal responsibility for the Gulf of Maine in all Maine citizens.

DMR has many projects, in various departments, that need assistance from individuals and groups who care about Maine's marine resources and who are willing to lend a hand to their success. Volunteers offering their time, interest, and skills to our programs work closely with marine scientists on a variety of research, monitoring, and restoration projects as well as in educating the public about these special marine resources. Each volunteer has the opportunity to participate in important scientific work, to learn new skills, to gain a better understanding of our rich and diverse coastal systems, and to help educate our children and the public about this research, conservation, and the marine environment.

*Life's most urgent question is: What are you
doing for others?*

Martin Luther King, Jr.



Maine Department of Marine Resources



Volunteer Programs

- *Marine Mammal Strandings
- *Marine Mammal Disentanglement
- *Water Quality Monitoring
- *PhytoPlankton/PSP Monitoring
- *Horseshoe Crab Monitoring
- *Maine State Aquarium
- *Burnt Island Lighthouse
- *River Fisheries Restoration

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